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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1388  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4319  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 4575  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 9679  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2567  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3971  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 9697  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0848  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001189

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DEPT FOR SCA/INS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KDEM](#) [NP](#)  
SUBJECT: STUDENT POLITICAL LEADERS WANT INTRA-PARTY  
DEMOCRACY

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

1. (C) Student political leaders representing all major political parties met with the Ambassador on May 5 to discuss Nepal's transition to democracy and their hopes for the future. A dynamic group, the students demonstrated a keen understanding of the difficulties faced by their party leaders. While they remained loyal party members, the students hoped that intra-party democracy would improve. Students worried about the true intentions of the Maoists, and the King, and urged the international community to be more united to pressure the Maoists to renounce violence before joining the political process. Others focused more on their goal of a republic rather than constituent assembly elections, which were just a next necessary step. Separately, a senior party member discussed the difficulties of balancing past service to the party with future hopes of winning an election in deciding whom the party should suggest be a Cabinet member. End Summary.

Students Worry About Parties...

2. (C) Student political leaders, many of whom were fresh from protesting on the streets from April 6-23, were excited about their role in restoring democracy when they met with the Ambassador on May 5. However, they said that there was much left to do and their responsibility to fight for democracy had not ended. According to one student, "one percent of the political problem was solved and ninety-nine percent remained." Other students agreed, and hoped that the political leaders could keep the support of the people. Students stressed that the parties needed to stay united and focused, and needed to avoid bickering in public in order to do this. Students highlighted the social and economic difficulties that Nepal was facing. The students acknowledged that there was no intra-party democracy in any party, and one noted that it was "the major fight of the younger generation." Another young man said, "While all want to end the monarchy, all want to be King."

...Maoists

13. (C) Students emphasized that people were tired of the Maoist insurgency and simply wanted peace. Most people did not know what a constituent assembly was, but they supported this Maoist demand as a way to peace. Some people thought the Maoists would now stop violence because they had achieved their demand of a constituent assembly, and that development would follow peace. The students, however, were less confident that the Maoists would abandon violence. Students said that the Maoists were continuing to extort people during the cease-fire, and that Maoists were now active in the Kathmandu Valley. Students worried that the Maoists would push to take as much as possible during negotiations with the government.

...King

14. (C) Some students stressed their goal was to create a republic. Others supported a constitutional monarchy, but hoped that the constituent assembly would correct "loopholes" which had allowed the King to take power in the past. Gagan Thapa, NC, warned that it was "not wise to trust the King." He worried that the civilian government needed to be firmly in control of the Royal Nepalese Army. Other students questioned whether the new government could count on the loyalty of the army, noting that the same families had served the King for generations. Another worried that the morale of the security forces was dangerously low.

...And International Community

15. (C) One female NC student leader suggested that the international community would be able to pressure the Maoists more strongly if it was more united. Another student stressed the importance of third country monitors in the cease-fire and peace negotiations, noting that the Maoists had "backed out" before. Only strong pressure by the people, the parties and the international community would keep the Maoists at the table this time.

View on Intra-Party Democracy from Inside

16. (C) The students believed the major problem of the political parties was their lack of internal democracy. Separately, Minendra Rijal, NC(D) Spokesman, told Emboff on May 4, that his party was struggling to define itself. He explained the party was having difficulty formulating a list of names of suggested Cabinet members. Traditionally, the Party elders should have been on the list. Many of them had not been active in the people's movement, however. If the party forwarded those names, then the people who had been active in the demonstrations would criticize the party. Conversely, if the party skipped the older generation and forwarded names of younger people, the older Parliamentarians would be insulted and would likely decide to leave the party and rejoin NC, thus weakening the NC(D) voting block. Rijal believed that the party should look toward a future election, and thus should support the people who had been on the street over the elder politicians. However, he noted that the issue was still under discussion within his party.

Comment

17. (C) The student political leaders are smart, insightful and dynamic. In future years, they may make great leaders of the country if they do not lose their idealism and become jaded in the process. The parties must become more inclusive at the top if they are to truly represent the will of the people and triumph over the Maoists. One good step would be to begin to listen to their own young members.

